

Every First Sunday of Lent, the Church sends us into the desert.

The Gospel says the Spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness. That's striking. Jesus doesn't wander there by accident. He's led there. Which means this season isn't random for us either.

And notice when this happens:

Right after His baptism.

Right after the Father says, "You are my beloved Son."

Temptation comes after the affirmation.

That matters. Because most of our temptations are really about identity.

The devil says, "If you are the Son of God..."

In other words: Prove it.

Turn stones into bread.

Take control of the kingdoms.

Force God to show up dramatically.

Each temptation is an invitation to grasp, to secure life on your own terms.

And honestly, that feels familiar.

We live in a city built on influence, visibility, leverage.

But notice what Jesus refuses to do. He refuses to use His power for Himself. He refuses glory without the cross. He refuses to manipulate the Father.

He stands there hungry and vulnerable. And He trusts.

That's the battle.

Lent exposes where we don't trust.

Fasting shows us how quickly we reach for comfort.

Silence reveals how restless we are.

Prayer uncovers how distracted we've become.

And that can feel uncomfortable. The desert always does.

But here's the good news: Jesus goes into the desert for us. He fights the battle where Adam, and we, have failed. He stands firm where Israel, and each of us, has fallen.

So Lent is not about proving ourselves to God.

It's about remembering we are already claimed by Him.

At your baptism — whether you remember it or not — the Father said over you what He said over Christ: "You are my beloved."

Most of our sin begins when we forget that.

We try to earn love.

We try to control.

We try to manufacture meaning for ourselves.

The devil tempts Jesus to doubt His sonship.

Jesus responds with trust.

That's the model.

This week, you don't need to conquer the whole of Lent. Just enter the desert honestly.

Maybe for you the desert is five quiet minutes before bed instead of scrolling.

Maybe it's fasting without announcing it.

Maybe it's finally going to confession after staying away for years.

Whatever it is: don't be afraid.

Because the desert is not empty. The Father is there.

And the One who was tempted now feeds us with His own Body.

**If we stay with Him in the wilderness, we won't leave empty.
We'll leave freer. Clearer. Less driven by fear.**

The voice that spoke at the Jordan still speaks.

"You are my beloved."

Believe that this Lent.

And the rest will follow.